
Title: Codex Maleficarum volume I (b)

Author: Annatar

Renunciation
of the Light

Sooner or later, the
would-be Infernalist
decides to curse the
light. With a formal
oath, he declares his
hate to his former
gods and tramples
symbols of their
power. Again, he does
this of his own will;
others might entice or
threaten him to do it,
but the oath must be
made in a clear state
of mind. Once it's
done, the new
Infernalist casts his
lot with Darkness. He
chooses his Word, and
that word is NO.

If the quester
hasn't already joined a
coven or sect, this
stage usually marks
his initiation into one.
This isn't a universal
step; many
Infernalists hate
company and
forswear even the
most demented
companions. But if a
diabolist craves
instruction and
fellowship in sin, he
has to renounce all
goodness in his heart
to enter. For
Infernalists who grow
up in degenerate
tribes, this step is
easy: what's to
renounce? But for an

initiate with some
semblance of
normalcy, this ritual
marks the point of no
return.

Many initiates
don't realize how large
a step it is. In the
hedonistic, irreverent
climate of the society,
some people join dark
covens simply for the
thrill of it. Fun or
not, the renunciation
is deadly serious to
the demons that are
inevitably paying
attention. Anyone who
seems like a worthy
candidate for
full-blown corruption
is noted, approached,
and very possible
enlisted among the
armies of the damned.

The Cold Thrust

If awareness yields
to Awakening, the
initiate finds himself
impaled on the icy
horns - of
Enlightenment.
For one who pursues
the darkest
Mysteries, this
moment is a rape of
the soul. Every fear,
every doubt, every
screaming terror the
initiate has ever felt
rips through him like
a gutter's hook. At this
moment, he stands at
the edge of Hell and
gets a taste of it. The
experience isn't
pleasant.

Some sects, induce
this moment with
harsh rituals. After
the Infernalist has
sworn his loyalty, the
other officiants beat
and otherwise torment

him until he either
snaps into Awakening,
becomes a gibbering
wreck or falls
unconsciousness.

It may be a prelude
to a wondrous career,
but the Cold Thrust is
always torturous. It
literally scars the
soul, tears it open on a
spiritual level. No
matter what the
diabolist does, this
moment will haunt
him like no other.
Some initiates snap
forever at this point
and become demented.
Some even die from
the shock. Those who
endure with their
wits intact become the
most dangerous kind
of magi: Those who
have gone to Hell and
returned.